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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, APRIL 22, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

Rice: Turkey the Best Example of Islam and Democracy -
Milliyet

Gul: We Trust Rice On the Armenian Question - Milliyet

Ambassador Jones: Kirkuk Cannot Be Tied to A Regional
Government - Hurriyet

Barzani: We Have No Territorial Demands from Regional
Countries - Aksam

EU Warns Turkey's Kurds to Stay Away from Ocalan - Milliyet

Kerry Supports Armenian 'Genocide' Claims - Aksam

Kerry at the Service of Armenian Lobby - Vatan

School for Suicide Bombers in Iran - Hurriyet

Belarus the New Target for Popular Uprisings - Sabah

OPINION MAKERS

Rice Calls for Regime Change in Belarus, Moscow Reacts -
Cumhuriyet

Belarus the New Target of the US - Yeni Safak

Rice: Time for Change in Belarus - Zaman

First NATO Meeting in Formerly Soviet Lithuania - Cumhuriyet

NATO Preparing to Support Middle East Peace Process - Yeni
Safak

Armenian Lobby's Show of Force in US Congress - Radikal

Papadopoulos Enjoys 71 Percent Popular Support - Zaman

BRIEFING

US Request To Establish Logistical Hub at Incirlik Airbase:
Washington may decide not to use the Incirlik Airbase as a
logistical cargo hub for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan
if a 'blanket clearance' is not given to American cargo
planes, "Yeni Safak" reports. US sources said a logistics
hub would be 'meaningless' without blanket access, but
refrained from making comments before they see the Turkish
government's decision. It adds that Turkish Foreign
Ministry Undersecretary Ali Tuygan said during a recent
visit to the US that Ankara would respond positively to the
US request, but that he did not elaborate on the content of
the Turkish decision. "Sabah" quotes a high-level US
official as saying that although the US request on Incirlik
had been submitted to the Turkish government in June last
year, an official response has not yet been received. 'We
have never linked the Incirlik issue to Armenian efforts to
pass a resolution in the US Congress, and we had expected
Ankara to respond earlier to our request within the scope of
strategic cooperation between the two countries,' the US
official said. 'Incirlik is not of crucial importance to
us,' the US official added, pointing out that the United
States had developed other ways to carry out the US mission.
Turkish diplomatic sources told "Sabah" that while
Washington may be disappointed by the delay, they did not
believe the US would give up on the use of Incirlik. The
paper believes Ankara will give Americans a 'blanket access'
on the cargo hub at Incirlik. A front-page story in today's
"Hurriyet" claims to include the text of an 'agreement'
reached by Turkish and US officials on the cargo hub. The
paper claims the 'agreement' is the result of a long
negotiation between Turkey and the US. The US Embassy in
Ankara released a statement on Friday clarifying that, as of
now, there is no agreement between the two countries
concerning the US request, nor have there been negotiations
on this issue.

Ambassador Jones on Iraq, Turkey, the PKK: US State
Department Special Representative for Iraq, Ambassador
Richard Jones, told "Hurriyet" that PKK activities in Iraq
continued in some 'remote' areas where there are no American
or Iraqi forces. Jones said that US forces are doing their
best to crackdown on PKK activities in the areas controlled

by the Americans. 'Iraq's political leaders know our position on the issue, and many Iraqis share Turkey's concerns,' Jones added. He noted that the US wants 'very close' ties between Iraq and Turkey in the long term, and called on Iraq's neighbors to support the democratization process in the country. Jones voiced hope that the insurgency will come to an end once resistance forces enter the democratic process in Iraq. 'The US supports democracy, territorial integrity, and a geographic federalism in Iraq,' he said, stressing that US policy on Iraq is not based on ethnic grounds. Jones emphasized that Kirkuk's status should be decided by all the people of Iraq. Jones added that a balance must be sought between claims of demographic changes in Kirkuk before Iraqi general elections, and the claims of those who have returned to their homes after being displaced under the former regime in Iraq.

Armenians, Turks Lobby in US Before April 24: John Kerry, Jack Reid and Paul Sarbanes were among the US Senators who attended a meeting held by the Armenian lobby in Washington Thursday to commemorate the 'genocide' of Armenians by the Ottoman Turks during World War I, Turkish papers report. Over 120 Turkish NGOs in the US and Canada sent a letter to Congress in which they claimed that 500,000 Turks and Muslims had been killed by Armenians who sided with the British, Russians, and French in an effort to establish an Armenian state in Ottoman territory. The letter called for a joint commission of historians to investigate the historical 'facts,' according to reports. Congressmen Robert Wexler and Ed Whitfield, members of the Turkish Friendship Group, sent a letter to US congressmen stressing that Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan had been exerting efforts to achieve a compromise between Turks and Armenians. 'As strong supporters of Turkish-Armenian rapprochement, we believe that it is now time for compromise, and hope the Armenian Government will extend an olive branch to Ankara to seize this opportunity,' the letter said. Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan said in Ankara yesterday that Turkey had taken all the necessary initiatives in the United States with regard to the 'genocide' charges, and that it is unnecessary to keep the issue high on the agenda. FM Gul told the press that during the unofficial NATO meetings in Vilnius, Lithuania, he explained to Secretary Rice about Turkish expectations that the Administration will block Armenian efforts in the Congress. The FM said that Rice had responded by saying that the US Administration would do its best on the issue. "Milliyet" reports that the Turkish and Armenian foreign ministries are holding secret talks aimed at the establishment of diplomatic ties, and that Foreign Minister Gul and his Armenian counterpart have agreed on a package of confidence-building measures to further rapprochement between the two countries. "Hurriyet" claims that Armenian President Robert Kocharyan said he will accept a Turkish proposal to set up a joint committee to study the claims of genocide, but on the condition that Ankara and Yerevan first restore diplomatic relations.

Talabani on Iraq-Turkey Ties: Iraqi President Jalal Talabani said Thursday he would work to improve ties with Ankara and pledged action to remove the PKK presence in northern Iraq, Turkish papers report. 'I will do my best to improve ties with Turkey on the political, economic and commercial levels,' Talabani told CNN-Turk on Thursday. Talabani pledged to work for the opening of a second border crossing between the two countries and the inauguration of a Turkish consulate in Mosul. Talabani also stressed that the Iraqi Kurds had used their right to self-determination in favor of a 'democratic, federal and united Iraq,' adding that, if invited, he would be 'very pleased' to visit Turkey.

PM Erdogan Returns From Afghanistan: Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan called on the international community on his return from an official visit to Afghanistan to support Kabul in its reform efforts, including the drafting of a new constitution and the holding of parliamentary elections in September. 'It is not possible to prevent Afghanistan from being a center of extreme movements, terrorism, and drug trafficking solely through the efforts of the Afghan people,' Erdogan said in Ankara on Thursday. 'The Afghan people respect the work of the 1,600 Turkish troops deployed in Afghanistan under the ISAF command,' the Prime Minister noted. Erdogan also pointed to efforts by Turkish contractors to handle infrastructure projects in the country, saying that Turkey would assist with more projects in the areas of education, health, and construction.

EU Warns Baydemir Against Policies of Violence: Ambassadors of EU countries in Ankara warned the mayor of Diyarbakir, Osman Baydemir, to stop pursuing policies of violence, and to keep a distance from imprisoned PKK leader Abdullah Ocalan. Baydemir was invited to a monthly meeting of EU envoys in Ankara. The Europeans reportedly told Baydemir that the European Union aims to unite nations, not divide them. The EU prefers the expansion of the rights and liberties of the people of Turkey - including the Kurds.

Baydemir complained that the Turkish state is not treating Kurds in southeastern Turkey equally, and said that support for the PKK would decline if the fighting in the region ends.

AKP - State Leadership Split Over 'Moderate Islam': A news commentary on the front page of "Cumhuriyet" points to the split between the ruling AK Party government and top state officials on the role Turkey is supposed to play in the US Broader Middle East and North Africa project. According to the report, the AKP supports the US plan to develop 'moderate Islam' in the region, while President Sezer, Chief of General Staff (TGS) Ozkok and other military commanders oppose it, stressing instead Turkey's secular, democratic structure. Both the presidency and TGS believe that secularism and moderate Islam cannot exist together, the report claims.

US Companies Withdraw from Turkey's Defense Contracts: US companies Bell Textron and General Atomics have withdrawn from Turkish defense undersecretariat contracts for helicopters and military drones, "Milliyet" reports. Bell Textron has decided to close down its office in Turkey, saying that Turkish requirements with regard to contracts and technology transfer were 'impossible' to meet. The US company Boeing is also considering pulling out of the bidding. The report claims that the withdrawal of US companies from the tender will weaken Turkey's hand in bargaining with other potential bidders.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Belarus, EU-Russia

"Putin's Fear"

Erdal Safak wrote in the mass appeal "Sabah" (4/22): "Secretary Rice made very bold remarks yesterday, saying it is the time for change in Belarus. She went even further by voicing clear support for the opposition against President Lukashchenko. At this point, Putin faces a no-win situation in Minsk, because all of the opposition elements in Belarus are pro-western. . Yet it is not realistic to expect regime change in Belarus anytime soon. It might take a year. As proven by other examples, there are three conditions that need to be met before a revolutionary process in a particular country: an election process, the candidacy of the current ruler or dictator, and his victory with allegations of fraud. Belarus will go through an election next year, and Lukashchenko will be one of the candidates. . There are also other countries in areas formerly under Soviet control that could see a revolutionary process, including Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, and Armenia. Azerbaijan might be added to this list, as well as the autonomous republic of Baskurdistan. In fact, Baskurdistan seems to be the major headache for Putin at this point. The people have given the current ruler, Rahimov, a May 1 deadline to submit his resignation. Otherwise, a popular uprising is expected, which would be a real nightmare for the Russian leader."

"EU-Russia Cooperation"

Kamuran Ozbir wrote in the nationalist "Ortadogu" (4/22): "The EU and Russia are getting ready for an agreement that would pave the way for cooperation on the economy, external security, culture, and in other areas. The agreement is expected to be signed on May 10. Moscow has been in close contact and cooperation with the EU in order to stand against US influence. Moscow worked very hard against the expansion of NATO toward the east, but voiced no objection to EU expansion that includes former Soviet republics. Even though Russia joined France and Germany to create an anti-war front against the US on Iraq, Europe never considered Russia as a prime ally. Both the US and EU are hoping to see diminishing Russian influence in the former Soviet republics. . Given the circumstances, the upcoming agreement between EU and Russia will also put pressure on the Russians to move toward compliance with EU criteria."

EDELMAN